

GRREAT

www.GRREAT.org/fosters

Foster Homes GRREAT Beginnings

SPRING 2013
EDITION



Canine Lyme Vaccine and GRREAT Foster Dogs

by Lucinda Twining, Medical Coordinator

We love these dogs! That's why we devote so much of our time to keeping them healthy and happy.

This goes for our foster dogs as well as our own dogs, so when we know they are threatened by a nasty disease carried by the deer tick, we want to do what we can to protect them; right? As you likely know, it had been GRREAT's stance that we do not approve nor do we recommend the Lyme vaccine for our foster dogs. We

were aware that the Lyme vaccine actually had the potential to be dangerous for the dogs who received the vaccine. Recently, I began to hear that progress had been made and there is a safer Lyme vaccine available now, so I decided it was time to investigate to get a clearer view of how best to protect our goldens.

I spoke with several vets that I work with in my capacity as GRREAT Medical Coordinator to learn more about the current vaccine and its efficacy and safety. Then, finally, I spoke with my own vet; this time not as

the Medical Coordinator for a rescue, but as the guardian of 4 of her patients. Here is what I learned:

First I learned that there are two types of Lyme vaccine being used at this time. One, commonly called the Fort Dodge Lyme vaccine, is actually made from a "killed" virus so that the body will make an antibody to the virus. Many human vaccines are made the same way. But the problem, in this case, is that once the virus enters the body, it begins to mutate very quickly so the antibodies have a very short time to hunt down and kill the virus before it

GRREAT Membership
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2013

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We are dependent on membership dues, donations, and fundraising to operate. Your \$40 membership dues keeps the GRREAT News coming every two months and will help save more Goldens in 2013. If you elect to "opt-out" of receiving the newsletter by mail, the \$40 is fully tax deductible. If you choose to receive the printed newsletter, \$30 is tax deductible (\$10 is the value of goods and services received). Membership also confers one vote in GRREAT elections.

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mutates to something that the antibodies do not recognize. This is also the vaccine that caused some bad side effects in many dogs.

The newer vaccine takes a different approach. The Merial vaccine causes the body to make antibodies for “protein A”. Interestingly, the dog’s body will never actually see “protein A”. Lyme disease is “protein A” in the tick’s body but by the time the virus enters the dog’s body it has already become “protein C” and is continuing to mutate. So the antibodies for “protein A” just float around in the dog’s blood stream doing nothing until an infected tick bites the dog. When the tick latches on and begins to draw up blood, it is also drawing up the antibodies to “protein A”. The idea here is that the antibodies will kill the Lyme disease (“protein A”) while it is still in the tick and before it gets the chance to infect the dog. The vaccination protocol is that the dog gets the initial vaccine followed by a booster in 4 weeks; then followed by a yearly vaccination. Sounds great, huh? Well, it is a step forward and it is a safer vaccine, however, it is only 70% effective against the Lyme disease virus.

The second thing I learned is that this somewhat pricey vaccine isn’t necessary for every dog. For dogs who live in urban or suburban areas and rarely, if ever, go into areas where the deer tick is found, then the vaccine may not be necessary. For these dogs, applying Frontline or equivalent each month as well as a vigilant family checking them over will help to protect them from the chance encounter with a deer tick. But, for dogs who live in rural areas or go on hikes or camping with their families, the vaccination is another layer of protection along with the monthly application of Frontline.

So, what does all of this mean? Well, as GRREAT’s Medical Coordinator, I am not recommending to the GRREAT Board that we add the vaccine to the pre-approved list of vaccines for our foster dogs because most of our foster dogs would be adopted before their booster shot would be scheduled to be administered. And, while the foster family can strongly recommend that the adoptive family take the dog to their vet to get the booster, there is no practical way to ensure that the family will follow through. Without that

booster in 4 weeks, the initial vaccine is worthless, so the money that GRREAT invested will have been wasted for those dogs. There are other considerations as well such as, is this vaccination appropriate for this dog? If family lives and will exercise the dog in a neighborhood with paved sidewalks or if the dog is a senior and will only go out on short walks, maybe not. In addition, many families are concerned about the number and frequency of vaccines given to dogs and they may not wish to have another vaccine added to their dog’s annual schedule. So, instead, we ask you, the foster family, to make sure that the adoptive family is aware that a safer version of the Lyme vaccine is out there and that they should make the decision on whether or not to vaccinate their new furry family member in concert with their vet.

Now, what about the other me, the one who lives with and deeply loves her 4 golden boys? After talking with my vet, I decided to do the vaccine for 3 of my 4 goldens. I am not doing it for my oldest boy because he spends very little time outside and at his age, it just didn’t make sense to me. But my other 3 got the initial vaccine and booster last year and will be getting the annual booster this spring. My recommendation to you for your own dogs is that you sit down with your and discuss everything you have read and heard about the Lyme vaccine. Talk with him/her about what makes sense for you, your pup(s), and your lifestyle. Then, go with your gut – that’s all you can do – just go with your gut.

Finally, Lyme disease can be a devastating disease for dogs, so please make sure that your foster dog’s family is aware of just how important it is to talk with their vet about the options for protecting their dog from Lyme disease. Please also stress that no matter which decision they (or you) make about the vaccine, it is important to continue to use Frontline (or similar product designed to kill/repel ticks – I prefer a natural equivalent for my dogs) and check their dog thoroughly for ticks anytime they spend time in an area where they may have come in contact with deer ticks.

GRREAT Events

Adoption Day

Saturday, April 6, 2013

12pm until 2pm

Petco

**9230B Old Keene Mill Rd.
Burke, VA 22015**

Annual

GRREAT Bark-B-Que

Saturday, April 27, 2013

11am until 3pm

**600 Quiet Waters Park Rd
Annapolis MD, 21403
More D'Tails to come**

Reston Pet Fiesta

Saturday, May 4, 2013

10am - 4pm

**Reston Town Center - Market St
Reston, VA**

Adoption Day

Saturday, May 4, 2013

12pm until 2pm

Petco

**12960 Middlebrook Rd.
Germantown, MD 20874**

Remember to have
your GRREAT
Foster Dog
Microchipped as
soon as possible!



I'm Ann Nelson, the POC Team Lead for GRREAT. My husband and I have enjoyed sharing our lives with several German Shepherds and Golden Retrievers. In 2008 we adopted our current GSD, Loba. We wanted to give back to the rescue that brought us Loba, so we started fostering German Shepherds. Soon after that we began fostering for GRREAT as well. I've dabbled in many hobbies throughout my life, but fostering dogs has given me the most satisfaction of anything I've ever done. In October 2011 I joined the POC team. I wish I could keep every Golden we foster, but since we don't have room for all of those dogs, being a POC gives me the chance use my fostering experiences to help other foster homes and other dogs. As the POC Team Lead I have the opportunity of working with a wonderful group of volunteers. I especially enjoy teaching new volunteers how rescue works and sharing information with the POC team members. This helps us all learn about various issues and situations that arise with foster dogs so that we can all benefit from each other's experiences. The photo shows me together with our current pack: our German Shepherd Loba, Annabelle chewing on a stick, and our newest boy, Tabor, who we just adopted in December.



POC - Lauren Greene

I currently reside in Stafford, VA with my three dogs, husband, and soon our son who is due the end April. I fell in love with Golden Retrievers when I was around 7-8 years old because of a dog named Chesapeake at my summer home. After a year or two of begging, I got my own named Heidi. I talked my mom into volunteering with a local Golden rescue back in 2007 because of a sudden loss of our 2 year old puppy. I figured it would be an awesome distraction for her and I was right! Soon we had a house full of fosters and she was Vice President of the rescue. When I got married and moved out, we continued fostering and volunteering.

POC - Kathi Crouse

My name is Kathi Crouse, I live in Glen Burnie, MD with my husband and our pack of Goldens! I first got involved with GRREAT 3 years ago after we lost our first Golden. I started out volunteering at events and adoption days, became a home visit volunteer and have been a POC for over a year now. I love being a POC and getting to know the foster homes that I am assigned to. We recently started fostering, something I have always wanted to do. I am honored and proud to be part of such a wonderful organization and have met so many wonderful people and made some great friends! Here's a picture of Sabrae, our most recent GRREAT adoptee.



Danny Hosein is currently the Program Coordinator for America's Great Outdoors at the U.S. Department of the Interior. Danny is a graduate of Trinity University in San Antonio, TX, where he received a B.A. in Political Science. Originally from Friendswood, TX, Danny has lived in Washington, DC for the past five years with his wife, Suzi, and golden retriever, Layla. Danny's interest in the golden retriever breed and GRREAT began when he met a golden for the first time at the Dog Days of Silver Spring in 2009. Danny and his wife Suzi knew they'd met their golden match when they met Layla (09-244). They had driven nearly 2 hours to meet Layla, who completely ignored them until the very end of their visit, when she slobbered on Danny's hand and began to play. A week and a Snowpocalypse later, Danny and Suzi got power back, turned on their computer, found out they were selected to adopt Layla, and drove again in the snow to bring Layla to her forever home, and the rest is history.

POCs - Suzi and Danny Hosein

Suzi Hosein has been a dog lover for years, but never had one growing up. After Suzi married Danny they researched dog breeds to find the perfect fit with their new family. They narrowed it down to either a Labrador or Golden Retriever, but after a chance meeting with a flock of Goldens at the Dog Days of Silver Spring in 2009 Suzi and Danny were smitten. After going to many GRREAT adoption days and scouring the website to find a potential pup they came across Layla (09-244). She was being fostered in Virginia a few hours away from where the Hosein's were living. They immediately fell in love with Layla, but were nervous that she didn't feel the same way because for most of our visit she was obsessing over a squeaky toy (a behavior she still has now) and not paying any attention to the hopeful adopters. It wasn't until the end of the visit when she came up and rolled on her back allowing Suzi and Danny to rub her belly and play with her toy that they thought they might have a chance. After receiving the good news that they were Layla's new family and a harrowing drive to pick up Layla in the midst of Snowpocalypse, their red-haired best friend settled into being the third member of the family. They have taken many road trips, gone to doggie obedience school, and pride themselves on having one of the friendliest dogs in the neighborhood and at the dog park.